**Paradigm** • Paradigm is a set of propositions that explain how the world is perceived, it contains a world view, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. “A paradigm is a set of beliefs, values techniques which are shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map dictating the kinds of problems scientist should address and the types of explanation that are acceptable”. (Kuhn, 1970)

Three major paradigms

1. Positivistic perspective

2. Interpretive perspective

3. Critical perspective

**Positivistic Perspective** It is the oldest paradigm. Linked with the work of A. Comte and E. Durkeim It defines reality as everything that can be perceived through the senses; other sources of knowledge are unreliable. Reality is out there, independent of human consciousness. Reality is objective, rests on order and is governed by strict, natural and unchangeable laws. It can be realized through experience.

**Interpretive Perspective** Interpretative social science relates to the works of Vico, Dilthey, and Weber. Interpretive theorists believe that reality is not ‘out there’ but in the minds of the people. Reality is internally experienced, is socially constructed through interaction and interpreted through the actors and is based on the definition people attach to it. Reality is not objective but subjective.

**Critical Perspective** This was developed out of the work of Karl Marx and the critical, theorists and feminists. Critical theorists see reality in a different manner. Reality is created not by nature but by the powerful people who manipulate condition and brainwash others to perceive things the way they want them to, to serve the needs of the powerful.